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**Anticipating and Managing Change in Government Agencies.(Company Profile)**

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**Text:**

Change within government is a matter of course. Technological advances, challenging regulations, limited staff resources, tightened budgets, and scrutinizing constituencies have created a quantum change in

and evolution of public agency management. How a government agency manages

that change affects its organizational focus, direction, and efficiency.

Specializing in anticipating and managing change in the public sector, Berryman & Henigar has been serving public agencies since 1975 -- providing almost three decades of the highest quality consulting management

and engineering services. Berryman & Henigar's trained professionals exhibit the vision to anticipate agency needs in the earliest development

stages and the power to adjust and expand the firm's services to meet those

needs. Strong partnerships with its public customers deliver the best services time after time.

In keeping with the tradition of flexibility and innovation, Berryman & Henigar first anticipated agencies' need for Internet-based technology solutions in 1999. This year, the firm has formed a strategic

alliance with GovHost.com, a cutting-edge technology services company specializing in creating virtual government solutions for cities and counties nationwide. Public agencies' pressing need to deliver services to

their citizens via the web -- services such as garbage pickup requests,

business license renewals, and property tax payments -- enables them to remain efficient, effective, and competitive regardless of size.

A clear example of the firm's "vision of change" can be seen in its creation of Employment Systems Inc. (ESI, a professional employee organization, in 1992. Anticipating that its government customers needed

flexible staff additions, the use of temporary employees without the headaches associated with the hiring process, and additional contract employees, Berryman & Henigar created ESI to address those needs. Providing enhanced flexibility of staff members while maximizing budgets,

ESI is an answer to agencies need for contracting privatized staff. Through

its ESI solution, Berryman & Henigar enables its customers to increase efficiency with a private staff who possesses a greater incentive to perform and produce.

What is virtual government, and why the need for it? Virtual government is a technology-enabled system that uses the web and a government's existing infrastructure to streamline all constituent services. Implementing a virtual government solution is rapidly becoming

the most critical element for municipalities, counties, and states.

Berryman & Henigar and GovHost.com are providing services on the cutting-edge to their public sector customers. Together, they are enabling

public customers to focus on increasing citizen services, not building a legion of technology staff members.

Berryman & Henigar's and govHost.com's strategic partnership provides benefits to both government agencies and the citizens they serve.

For government officials, virtual government benefits are numerous:

- \* Less administrative intervention necessary by current staff
- \* Ability to redirect staff into less administrative, and more fulfilling, roles

- \* Total connectivity to all city departments and separate physical facilities

- \* Citizen payment of water, traffic, and tax bills online
- \* Deletion of unnecessary paperwork
- \* Increased speed of processing requests and complaints

Virtual government enables agencies to provide attractive benefits to citizens:

- \* Ability to choose customized services, i.e., tax bill payment or business license permitting or crime tip reporting, for availability to citizens via a central web site.

- \* Ability to request government services 24 hours a day, 7 days

a  
week

\* Conduct business online, not in line at the local governmental office

\* Quick and easy-to-understand access to government leaders at all levels.

Berryman & Henigar, through its partnership with GovHost.com, enables virtual cities and counties to see dramatic increases in the number of citizens they serve. For example, the City of Conyers, Georgia, just east of Atlanta, has implemented a virtual government solution as part of a larger project to overhaul computer systems. GovHost.com has enabled a web help desk that serves as a one-stop location for citizens to request sanitation service and street or utility repairs, or to ask questions and register complaints. Residents also can access the web site to view city council meeting agendas and minutes in real-time; review government job openings; complete permit requests; view traffic reports; check out business license listings; and pay property taxes and traffic citations online.

Berryman & Henigar and GovHost.com are providing virtual government services for agencies looking to outsource their entire technology departments as well as for agencies interested in using just one "piece" of the virtual government solution. A flexible methodology enables governments of all sizes -- with all budget ranges -- access to increased citizen services. And in a continuing quest for better services at lower costs to their customers, Berryman & Henigar and govHost.com are enabling governments to provide these online, interactive services without charging additional fees to citizens.

"An expansion of our virtual government solution enables the City of Conyers to provide some of the most cutting-edge services for our citizens," says Rebecca Woolcot, Conyers City Manager. "A progressive virtual government solution is the answer for moving Conyers ahead of most U.S. cities in online services." In the spirit of its "vision of change" and to better serve its existing public customers, Berryman & Henigar realized and responded to the reality that the days of 9-to-5, five-days-a-week government are disappearing. And Business Week Online

recently reported e-government will benefit the economy. As the cost of delivering services declines, governments may be able to hold the line on tax increases despite population growth.

"There's no question this can make delivery of services more efficient, so there will be savings," said Patricia McGinnis, CEO of the Washington-based Council on Excellence in Government.

As more and more governments work to be more responsive and efficient by moving online, Berryman & Henigar and GovHost.com are committed to enabling these public agencies to provide Internet services for the first time. The power to change and the power to build is alive and well at Berryman & Henigar

**CLOSEUP**

Company Focus: Provides engineering, management, outsourcing and e-commerce services to local governments

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**Virtual government puts locals online**

Dunn, David

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**Abstract:**

The Internet has forever changed private and public-sector service delivery models. Users who shop for airline tickets or books via the Web are now beginning to demand the ability to pay traffic tickets and water bills online. Cities and counties are employing "virtual government" to meet those growing demands. Virtual government uses the Web and a local government's infrastructure to streamline city/county services. Through online transactions, residents are able to request any city/county service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Several Georgia cities have implemented virtual government systems to offer more efficient services to customers.

**Text:**

The Internet has forever changed private and public-sector service delivery models. Users who shop for airline tickets or books via the Web are now beginning to demand the ability to pay traffic tickets and water bills online. And cities and counties are employing "virtual government" to meet those growing demands.

Virtual government uses the Web and a local government's infrastructure to streamline city/county services. Through online transactions, residents are able to request any city/county service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

They  
are able to pay traffic tickets, renew business licenses, report  
missed  
garbage pickups, and even anonymously report crimes.

Several Georgia cities have implemented virtual government systems to  
offer  
more efficient services to their rapidly growing populations. For  
example,  
Canton is using the Web to enhance customer service and reduce  
administrative costs. Located approximately 35 miles from Atlanta, the  
city  
expects its population to grow 12 percent annually for the next 10  
years.

Such a dramatic increase can place a strain on the most  
technologically  
advanced city, but the predicament was significantly magnified for  
Canton.  
The community of 10,000 (and growing) did not have standardized PCs or  
operating systems, centralized communications or financial systems, or  
Y2K-compliant hardware or software.  
This year, the city cleaned house on its operating systems and  
implemented  
new hardware and software to create a virtual government system. In  
October, the system went live, giving Canton residents the ability to  
pay  
utility bills and taxes online. More improvements soon will be  
implemented  
to allow for less paperwork and faster processing of requests. "The  
solution provides long-term savings for the city and unprecedented  
benefits  
for our residents," says Canton Mayor Cecil Pruett.

just east of Atlanta, Conyers (population 8,000) also has launched  
virtual  
gov, ernment services as part of a larger project to overhaul the  
city's  
computer systems. City offices have been linked on a central network,  
and  
Internet and e-mail services have been deployed.

Conyers has a web-based help desk for residents to request sanitation  
service and street or utility repairs, or to ask questions and  
register  
complaints.

In addition, Conyers residents can access the web site to:

view the city council's meeting agendas and minutes;

view government job openings;

complete permit requests;  
view traffic reports; and

view business license listings.

In late 2000, residents also will be able to pay property taxes and traffic citations via the Web.

As in Conyers, Rockdale County's government has developed a public webbased help desk so that its 68,000 residents can easily communicate with city departments. Thirty departments, in turn, have been networked so that they can share information on taxes, human resources, finances and utility billing via an intranet.

"This system will enable our county government to run more efficiently, productively and cost-effectively than in the past," says Robert Brown, information services director for the county.

With increased resident demands and population growth, cities and counties are forced to find ways to improve efficiency. Through virtual government, cities and counties can streamline their internal operations, and allow their residents to conduct business online, instead of in line at government offices.

The author is president of VC3, Columbia, S.C.

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